

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 03504 211432Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 AID-05 COME-00 /023 W
-----017323 212224Z /65

R 211215Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4636

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3504

FOR NEA/ARN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: LE, ASEC, EFIN
SUBJECT: LEBANESE INTEREST IN BANK SECURITY

1. MR. ASSAD SAWAYA, PRESIDENT OF BANKERS ASSOCIATION, CALLED ON ME MORNING JULY 20 TO SAY LEBANESE BANKERS INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT NEED FOR PHYSICAL SECURITY. THEY HAD HAD FIVE OR SIX HOLDUPS IN THE PAST TWO MONTHS. HOLDUPS PERPETRATED BY MASKED MEN WHO LINE BANK STAFFS UP AGAINST THE WALL AND EMPTY TILL IN TRADITIONAL AMERICAN FASHION. THERE WAS ALMOST NO SECURITY PROVIDED TO BANKS TODAY AND THEY ARE LARGELY HELPLESS BEFORE SUCH ASSAULTS.

2. BRIEFLY, THEY WOULD LIKE TO SET UP A PROTECTIVE SYSTEM FOR THE BANKS ALONG AMERICAN LINES. THEY NEED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ON SUCH QUESTIONS AS LIAISON BETWEEN BANKS AND GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES, ON HARDWARE, ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS, ETC., AND ON GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS REGARDING THE USE OF GUARDS. THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT HAD GIVEN BANKS GREEN LIGHT TO GO AHEAD WITH INQUIRIES. WHAT THEY ARE INTERESTED IN IS TALKING TO PRIVATE AMERICAN FIRMS ACTIVE IN THIS FIELD. SAWAYA SAID THEY HAD ALREADY HAD ONE OFFER FROM BRINKS BRITISH BRANCH, BUT WOULD LIKE ONE OR TWO OFFERS FROM AMERICAN COMPANIES. HE SAID THAT ONLY THE MOST SOPHISTICATED COMPANIES NEED APPLY.
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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 03504 211432Z

HE DOES NOT WANT US TO ADVERTISE THEIR INTEREST IN THE COMMERCE DEPARTMENT'S BULLETIN BECAUSE HE FEELS THEY WOULD GET TOO MANY RESPONSES AND BE UNABLE TO DEAL WITH THEM.

3. ACTION REQUESTED: I DO NOT KNOW HOW MANY AMERICAN COMPANIES ARE ACTIVE IN THIS FIELD BUT ASSUME SOMEBODY

IN WASHINGTON IS KNOWLEDGEABLE ON SUBJECT AND CAN PASS
WORD TO ONE OR TWO FIRMS TELLING THEM THERE IS
COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITY AND SUGGESTING THEY GET IN TOUCH
DIRECTLY WITH SAWAYA. ALTERNATIVELY, WE WOULD BE GLAD
TO ARRANGE CONTACT IF THEY WOULD LIKE TO WORK THROUGH
US.
PARKER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 21-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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TAGS: ASEC, EFIN, BTIO, LE, US
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